

(b) Requests for modifications to an application will not be accepted for applications submitted after July 16, 2007.

[72 FR 27944, May 17, 2007]

**§ 656.12 Improper commerce and payment.**

The following provision applies to applications filed under both this part and 20 CFR part 656 in effect prior to March 28, 2005, and to any certification resulting from those applications:

(a) Applications for permanent labor certification and approved labor certifications are not articles of commerce. They shall not be offered for sale, barter or purchase by individuals or entities. Any evidence that an application for permanent labor certification or an approved labor certification has been sold, bartered, or purchased shall be grounds for investigation under this part and may be grounds for denial under § 656.24, revocation under § 656.32, debarment under § 656.31(f), or any combination thereof.

(b) An employer must not seek or receive payment of any kind for any activity related to obtaining permanent labor certification, including payment of the employer's attorneys' fees, whether as an incentive or inducement to filing, or as a reimbursement for costs incurred in preparing or filing a permanent labor certification application, except when work to be performed by the alien in connection with the job opportunity would benefit or accrue to the person or entity making the payment, based on that person's or entity's established business relationship with the employer. An alien may pay his or her own costs in connection with a labor certification, including attorneys' fees for representation of the alien, except that where the same attorney represents both the alien and the employer, such costs shall be borne by the employer. For purposes of this paragraph (b), payment includes, but is not limited to, monetary payments; wage concessions, including deductions from wages, salary, or benefits; kickbacks, bribes, or tributes; in kind payments; and free labor.

(c) Evidence that an employer has sought or received payment from any source in connection with an application for permanent labor certification

or an approved labor certification, except for a third party to whose benefit work to be performed in connection with the job opportunity would accrue, based on that person's or entity's established business relationship with the employer, shall be grounds for investigation under this part or any appropriate Government agency's procedures, and may be grounds for denial under § 656.32, revocation under § 656.32, debarment under § 656.31(f), or any combination thereof.

[72 FR 27945, May 17, 2007]

**§ 656.15 Applications for labor certification for *Schedule A* occupations.**

(a) *Filing application.* An employer must apply for a labor certification for a *Schedule A* occupation by filing an application with the appropriate DHS office, and not with an ETA application processing center.

(b) *General documentation requirements.* A *Schedule A* application must include:

(1) An *Application for Permanent Employment Certification* form, which includes a prevailing wage determination in accordance with § 656.40 and § 656.41.

(2) Evidence that notice of filing the *Application for Permanent Employment Certification* was provided to the bargaining representative or the employer's employees as prescribed in § 656.10(d).

(c) *Group I documentation.* An employer seeking labor certification under Group I of *Schedule A* must file with DHS, as part of its labor certification application, documentary evidence of the following:

(1) An employer seeking *Schedule A* labor certification for an alien to be employed as a physical therapist (§ 656.5(a)(1)) must file as part of its labor certification application a letter or statement, signed by an authorized state physical therapy licensing official in the state of intended employment, stating the alien is qualified to take that state's written licensing examination for physical therapists. Application for certification of permanent employment as a physical therapist may be made only under this § 656.15 and not under § 656.17.

(2) An employer seeking a *Schedule A* labor certification for an alien to be

employed as a professional nurse (§ 656.5(a)(2)) must file as part of its labor certification application documentation that the alien has received a Certificate from the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS); that the alien holds a full and unrestricted (permanent) license to practice nursing in the state of intended employment; or that the alien has passed the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN). Application for certification of employment as a professional nurse may be made only under this § 656.15(c) and not under § 656.17.

(d) *Group II documentation.* An employer seeking a *Schedule A* labor certification under Group II of *Schedule A* must file with DHS, as part of its labor certification application, documentary evidence of the following:

(1) An employer seeking labor certification on behalf of an alien to be employed as an alien of exceptional ability in the sciences or arts (excluding those in the performing arts) must file documentary evidence showing the widespread acclaim and international recognition accorded the alien by recognized experts in the alien's field; and documentation showing the alien's work in that field during the past year did, and the alien's intended work in the United States will, require exceptional ability. In addition, the employer must file documentation about the alien from at least two of the following seven groups:

(i) Documentation of the alien's receipt of internationally recognized prizes or awards for excellence in the field for which certification is sought;

(ii) Documentation of the alien's membership in international associations, in the field for which certification is sought, which require outstanding achievement of their members, as judged by recognized international experts in their disciplines or fields;

(iii) Published material in professional publications about the alien, about the alien's work in the field for which certification is sought, which shall include the title, date, and author of such published material;

(iv) Evidence of the alien's participation on a panel, or individually, as a judge of the work of others in the same or in an allied field of specialization to that for which certification is sought;

(v) Evidence of the alien's original scientific or scholarly research contributions of major significance in the field for which certification is sought;

(vi) Evidence of the alien's authorship of published scientific or scholarly articles in the field for which certification is sought, in international professional journals or professional journals with an international circulation;

(vii) Evidence of the display of the alien's work, in the field for which certification is sought, at artistic exhibitions in more than one country.

(2) An employer seeking labor certification on behalf of an alien of exceptional ability in the performing arts must file documentary evidence that the alien's work experience during the past twelve months did require, and the alien's intended work in the United States will require, exceptional ability; and must submit documentation to show this exceptional ability, such as:

(i) Documentation attesting to the current widespread acclaim and international recognition accorded to the alien, and receipt of internationally recognized prizes or awards for excellence;

(ii) Published material by or about the alien, such as critical reviews or articles in major newspapers, periodicals, and/or trade journals (the title, date, and author of such material shall be indicated);

(iii) Documentary evidence of earnings commensurate with the claimed level of ability;

(iv) Playbills and star billings;

(v) Documents attesting to the outstanding reputation of theaters, concert halls, night clubs, and other establishments in which the alien has appeared or is scheduled to appear; and/or

(vi) Documents attesting to the outstanding reputation of theaters or repertory companies, ballet troupes, orchestras, or other organizations in which or with which the alien has performed during the past year in a leading or starring capacity.

(e) *Determination.* An Immigration Officer determines whether the employer

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and alien have met the applicable requirements of § 656.10 and of *Schedule A* (§ 656.5); reviews the application; and determines whether or not the alien is qualified for and intends to pursue the *Schedule A* occupation. The *Schedule A* determination of DHS is conclusive and final. The employer, therefore, may not appeal from any such determination under the review procedures at § 656.26.

(f) *Refiling after denial.* If an application for a *Schedule A* occupation is denied, the employer, except where the occupation is as a physical therapist or a professional nurse, may at any time file for a labor certification on the alien beneficiary's behalf under § 656.17. Labor certifications for professional nurses and for physical therapists shall not be considered under § 656.17.

[69 FR 77386, Dec. 27, 2004, as amended at 73 FR 78068, Dec. 19, 2008]

### § 656.16 Labor certification applications for sheepherders.

(a) *Filing requirements and required documentation.* (1) An employer may apply for a labor certification to employ an alien (who has been employed legally as a nonimmigrant sheepherder in the United States for at least 33 of the preceding 36 months) as a sheepherder by filing an *Application for Permanent Employment Certification* form directly with DHS, not with an office of DOL.

(2) A signed letter or letters from each U.S. employer who has employed the alien as a sheepherder during the immediately preceding 36 months, attesting the alien has been employed in the United States lawfully and continuously as a sheepherder for at least 33 of the immediately preceding 36 months, must be filed with the application.

(b) *Determination.* An Immigration Officer reviews the application and the letters attesting to the alien's previous employment as a sheepherder in the United States, and determines whether or not the alien and the employer(s) have met the requirements of this section.

(1) The determination of the Immigration Officer under this paragraph (b) is conclusive and final. The employer(s) and the alien, therefore, may not make use of the review procedures

set forth at §§ 656.26 and 656.27 to appeal such a determination.

(2) If the alien and the employer(s) have met the requirements of this section, the Immigration Officer must indicate on the *Application for Permanent Employment Certification* form the occupation, the immigration office that made the determination, and the date of the determination (see § 656.30 for the significance of this date). The Immigration Officer must then promptly forward a copy of the *Application for Permanent Employment Certification* form, without attachments, to the Office of Foreign Labor Certification (OFLC) Administrator.

(c) *Alternative filing.* If an application for a sheepherder does not meet the requirements of this section, the application may be filed under § 656.17.

[69 FR 77386, Dec. 27, 2004, as amended at 71 FR 35523, June 21, 2006]

### § 656.17 Basic labor certification process.

(a) *Filing applications.* (1) Except as otherwise provided by §§ 656.15, 656.16, and 656.18, an employer who desires to apply for a labor certification on behalf of an alien must file a completed Department of Labor *Application for Permanent Employment Certification* form (ETA Form 9089). The application must be filed with an ETA application processing center. Incomplete applications will be denied. Applications filed and certified electronically must, upon receipt of the labor certification, be signed immediately by the employer in order to be valid. Applications submitted by mail must contain the original signature of the employer, alien, attorney, and/or agent when they are received by the application processing center. DHS will not process petitions unless they are supported by an original certified ETA Form 9089 that has been signed by the employer, alien, attorney and/or agent.

(2) The Department of Labor may issue or require the use of certain identifying information, including user identifiers, passwords, or personal identification numbers (PINS). The purpose of these personal identifiers is to allow the Department of Labor to associate a